

TONKAWA INDIANS AT FORT GRIFFIN, TEXAS.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

TRANSMITTING,

*In response to House resolution of the 20th instant, a brief and copies of papers touching the number and condition of the Tonkawa Indians at Fort Griffin, Tex.*

FEBRUARY 1, 1876.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT, January 31, 1876.

The Secretary of War has the honor to transmit to the House of Representatives brief and copies of papers containing the information called for by House resolution of the 20th instant, "touching the number and condition of the Tonkawa Indians at Fort Griffin, Tex., and what provision has been made for their care and protection."

WM. W. BELKNAP,  
Secretary of War.

*Brief of papers relating to the issue of rations to, and condition of, the Tonkawa and Lipan Indians at Fort Griffin, Tex.*

In February, 1872, Col. W. H. Wood, Eleventh Infantry, commanding Fort Griffin, Tex., reported that there were then living at that post, within half a mile of the flag-staff, 126 Tonkawa Indians—all that were left of that once powerful tribe; that of these, 24 were employed as scouts, the remainder being principally old men, women, and children; that the scouts received the Army ration and the remainder full rations of meat and flour and half rations of coffee, sugar, soap, and salt.

In August, 1872, in answer to an inquiry on the subject from headquarters Department of Texas, Colonel Wood reported that periodical issues of rations had been made to the Tonkawas ever since the establishment of Fort Griffin, July, 1867; that a cessation of the issues would render it impossible for the old men, women, and children, who composed the greater portion of the tribe, to live; and he therefore recommended that these Indians be excepted from the operations of General Order No. 54 of 1872, copy annexed:

[General Order No. 54.]

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
 ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
 Washington, June 25, 1872.

"In future no issue of rations or supplies will be made from the Army stores to Indians, except as allowed and restricted in the following paragraphs of the Revised Regulations for the Army of 1863:

"1202. When subsistence can be spared from the military supplies, the commanding officer is authorized to allow its issue, in *small quantities*, to Indians visiting military posts on the frontiers or in their respective nations. The return for this issue shall be signed by the Indian agent (when there is one present) and approved by the commanding officer of the post or station.

"1203. Regular daily or periodical issues of subsistence to Indians, or issues of subsistence in bulk to Indian agents for the use of Indians, are forbidden."

By order of the Secretary of War:

E. D. TOWNSEND,  
*Adjutant-General.*

On receipt of Colonel Wood's reports, the department commander forwarded it to the Adjutant-General, and, pending the decision of the Secretary of War on the subject, authorized the continuance of the issue of rations to the Tonkawas. The issues appear to have been continued for some time under this authority; no record of specific orders for their discontinuance is found earlier than April 27, 1875, as hereinafter noted.

April 23, 1873, Lieut.-Col. G. P. Buell, Eleventh Infantry, then commanding Fort Griffin, recommended that each head of family of the Tonkawas be furnished with a small flock of sheep, and, in accordance with Colonel Buell's recommendation, the Interior Department authorized the expenditure of \$400 to be applied to the purchase of sheep for distribution to the Indians under his direction.

In August, 1874, the Interior Department, upon the recommendation of Lieutenant-Colonel Buell, authorized a small band of Lipans to remove from the Fort Sill reservation and unite with the Tonkawas at Fort Griffin.

In November, 1874, the Interior Department authorized the expenditure of \$500 for the purchase of cows for the Tonkawas, and the animals were purchased under the direction of the commanding officer at Fort Griffin.

General Order No. 129 of 1874 having republished General Order No. 54 of 1872, Lieutenant-Colonel Buell, in January, 1875, inquired if the order affected the issue of rations to the Tonkawas and Lipans at Fort Griffin, and about the same time ordered that such of the Indians as were not enlisted as scouts should receive the usual Indian ration until further instructions from the department commander. April 27, 1875, the department commander decided that the order applied to the Tonkawas and Lipans, and the issues to them were accordingly stopped.

In April, 1875, the Interior Department authorized the expenditure of \$375 for the purchase of cows and goats for the Tonkawas and Lipans at Fort Griffin.

May 10, 1875, Lieutenant-Colonel Davidson, then commanding Fort Griffin, reported that the Tonkawa Indians had been friendly to the whites for many years; that many of them had rendered good service as scouts, and that they had no reservation.

He recommended that they be given a reservation in the Indian Territory and placed under an agent, and that, until removed, they be fed by some department of the Government.

In June, 1875, the post-commander directed the issue to them of a *ration of fresh beef*, to prevent starvation, and this issue apparently con-

tinued until the order for it was revoked by the post-commander, September 10, 1875.

In June, 1875, the question of issue of rations to certain Indians near Cerro Gordo, Cal., and to the Seminole Negro Indians at Fort Duncan, Tex., being under consideration, and the Interior Department having reported that it had no appropriation available for purchase of rations for such Indians, the Secretary of War informed the Interior Department that the War Department had no appropriation applicable to the subsistence of Indians, except when held as prisoners of war, and that it could not therefore take the responsibility of feeding these Indians, and would not be responsible for any outbreak resulting from the failure to feed them.

[NOTE.—The Interior Department, upon a subsequent presentation of the case of the Seminole Negro Indians, has finally consented to their removal to the Indian Territory, and proposes to make application to Congress for an appropriation for that purpose.]

The decision of the War Department was construed at headquarters Department of Texas as prohibiting further issues to the Tonkawas and Lipans, and since September 10, 1875, no issue appears to have been made to them, except a box of condemned hard bread, given to them in accordance with a recommendation of the inspector.

The families of those Indians employed as scouts are, however, allowed to *buy* subsistence stores to the amount of half the pay of each man.

October 9, 1875, Lieutenant-Colonel Buell forwards copies of all papers on file at Fort Griffin, pertaining to the condition, subsistence, &c., of the Tonkawa and Lipan Indians at that post, with an earnest request that the whole subject, with a statement of their condition, be submitted to the President.

Colonel Buell states that there are now at Fort Griffin 119 Tonkawas and 26 Lipans, whose condition is so deplorable that something should be done for them, and, as a last resort, he wishes to submit their case to the President for such action as can be taken until the meeting of Congress. He refers to the correspondence between the War and Interior Departments relative to the subsistence of Indians similarly situated, in which the Secretary of War declines to feed the Indians from Army appropriations, and, while disclaiming any intention to reflect on any branch of the Government, thinks that these Indians should be cared for by some one. He points out the services they have rendered, and remarks on their friendly attitude toward the whites for years.

Colonel Buell reports that these Indians have still most of the stock purchased for them by the Interior Department, and have only occasionally butchered some when driven to it by hunger. They have been given 20 sacks of flour during the summer by the post-trader, who, as appears from the correspondence forwarded by Colonel Buell, now wishes to know how he is to be paid for the flour.

Colonel Buell has sent some of the Indians out, under protection of a detachment of troops, to kill buffalo, to keep them from starvation, or from committing thefts and depredations, until the Government acts in their behalf. He recommends that the Lipans be sent back to Fort Sill, where it is understood they have lands allotted them, and that the Tonkawas be provided with farming-lands and stock for breeding purposes, with half-rations for three years, at the expiration of which time he thinks they would be self-supporting.

The papers are forwarded by General Ord, who remarks that "something should be done to get these Indians on a reserve where they will

not starve or depredate, the only alternative they have where they now are." The Lieutenant-General forwards the papers "for the favorable consideration of the Government," stating that "the Tonkawas are a very deserving people, probably the most so of any Indians we have, and it is a shame that we leave them in their present destitute condition. While hostile Indians are loaded down with presents, the Tonkawas and Lipans are allowed to starve.

October 18, 1875, Lieutenant-Colonel Buell telegraphs to headquarters Department of Texas that the Lipan chief reports one Lipan and a squaw as having gone from Fort Griffin to the plains to join the Apaches. They have been gone three weeks, and will shortly return for more, for the purpose of raiding for scalps and horses; the Lipan reports cause of leaving as stoppage of rations and near approach of starvation. Colonel Buell reports half his available cavalry as absent with surveying party, and can do very little with remainder, but had he consent, believes he could, with help of the Lipan chief, find the Apaches.

Forwarded by General Ord for the information of the Interior Department, in connection with previous papers herein referred to.

E. D. TOWNSEND,  
*Adjutant-General.*

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
November, 4, 1875.

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington City, November 13, 1875.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit a brief of papers of which copies have, from time to time, been sent to your Department, relative to the subsistence of Tonkawa and Lipan Indians at Fort Griffin, Tex., and respectfully inviting your attention to the recent reports of Colonel Buell upon the helpless condition of these Indians, and to the recommendations of Lieutenant-General Sheridan and General Ord, in their behalf. I earnestly request the Interior Department will take some action with a view to placing the said Indians on a reservation.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. W. BELKNAP,  
*Secretary of War.*

The Hon. the SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, December 16, 1875.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th ultimo, upon the subject of the Tonkawa and Lipan Indians, at Fort Griffin, Texas, and in reply respectfully invite your attention to the inclosed copy of a report, dated the 13th instant, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to whom the matter was referred.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

Z. CHANDLER,  
*Secretary.*

The Hon. the SECRETARY OF WAR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C., December 13, 1875.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, by reference from you, for immediate attention and report, of a communication from the War Department, under date of the 13th ultimo, submitting brief of papers sent to Department relative to subsistence of Tonkawa and Lipan Indians, and inviting attention to report of Colonel Buell and recommendations of Generals Sheridan and Ord, and requesting some action on the part of the Department to place these Indians on a reservation. In reply thereto, I would respectfully state that these Tonkawa Indians are a portion of those captured by Colonel McKenzie, who, when taken to Fort Sill, were met and recognized by a small band of seven lodges of Lipan Indians, (27 in number,) to whom they are related by intermarriage. These Lipans, being at enmity with the Indians at Fort Sill, requested permission to remove to Fort Griffin, in Texas, and serve the Government as scouts, as their relatives, the Tonkawas, are doing. This request, having the approval of Colonel Buell, was made the subject of a report to the Department under date of August 18, 1873, in which it is stated "that there is no objection to the consolidation of these two tribes; but if consolidated, they should be located at the Southern Apache or Mescalero agency at Fort Stanton, N. Mex., where most of the Lipans are." If a removal be practicable, and if there be any appropriation from which funds can be used by the War Department to effect their removal, I would respectfully recommend that they be located on the Hot Springs Indian reservation, or the Mescalero-Apache Indian reservation, both being in New Mexico; or in case it be deemed preferable to remove them to the Indian Territory, that a home might be selected among the Kickapoos for them. But let the point of removal be fixed where it may, I would respectfully state that there are no funds at the disposal of this Office to defray the expense thereof, and recommend, should there be no other available means, that Congress be requested to make the necessary appropriation for their immediate removal to, and establishment upon, some suitable permanent reservation.

The communication of the War Department is herewith returned.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. Q. SMITH,  
*Commissioner.*

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

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WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington City, December 20, 1875.*

SIR: Replying to your letter of the 13th instant, in answer to mine of the 13th ultimo, relative to the Tonkawa and Lipan Indians at Fort Griffin, Tex., and inviting attention to (transmitted) recommendation of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs as to the placing of the said Indians upon a reservation, I have the honor to inform you that this Department has no appropriation at its command from which to pay for the proposed removal, and I would suggest that the Department of the

Interior ask, at the hands of Congress, the necessary legislation in the matter.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. W. BELKNAP,  
*Secretary of War.*

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, December 30, 1875.*

SIR: Referring to a communication from the honorable the Secretary of War, dated the 20th instant, relative to the removal of the Tonkawa and Lipan Indians located near Fort Griffin, Tex., &c., and suggesting that legislation be asked from Congress to effect the object, I have the honor to respectfully invite your attention to the inclosed copy of a letter, dated the 28th instant, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to whom the subject was referred, in which he suggests that, for reasons stated, the War Department be solicited to furnish an estimate of the probable cost of the removal of the Indians in question from Fort Griffin to the Mescalero-Apache reservation or the Hot Springs reservation in New Mexico.

The matter is presented for the consideration of the honorable the Secretary of War.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

Z. CHANDLER,  
*Secretary.*

The Hon. SECRETARY OF WAR.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C., December 28, 1875.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, by reference from you, of a letter from the honorable Secretary of War, dated the 20th instant, in reference to the Tonkawa and Lipan Indians, at Fort Griffin, Tex., stating that that Department has no appropriation at its command from which to pay for the proposed removal and location upon an Indian reservation of these Indians, and suggestion that this Department ask, at the hands of Congress, the necessary legislation in the matter.

Before taking any action with a view to procuring the legislation desired, I respectfully suggest that the War Department be solicited to furnish this Department with an estimate of the probable cost of removing these Indians from their present location and establishing them either upon the Mescalero-Apache or Hot Springs reservation in New Mexico. This request is made under the impression that the officers of that Department have more correct information and better opportunity and means of advising themselves as to the character of the region of country required to be traversed in making this proposed removal and the necessary expense attending the same.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. Q. SMITH,  
*Commissioner.*

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

[Indorsement.]

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
Washington, January 7, 1876.

Official copy respectfully referred, through headquarters of the Army, to the commanding general Military Division of the Missouri, to obtain and forward to this Office an estimate of the probable cost of removal of these Indians, as desired by the Interior Department.

By order of the Secretary of War:

E. D. TOWNSEND,  
*Adjutant-General.*

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
Chicago, Ill., January 21, 1876.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of copies of correspondence between the War and Interior Departments, concerning the removal of the Tonkawas and Lipans, Indians, from Fort Griffin, Tex., to the Mescalero-Apache or to the Hot Springs reservation in New Mexico, forwarded to me to obtain and present an estimate of the probable cost of the removal of the Indians as stated.

I have taken the necessary steps to obtain the information desired, and as soon as it is received will advise the War Department on the subject.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant-General, Commanding.*

ADJUTANT-GENERAL *United States Army,*  
(Through headquarters of the Army, Saint Louis, Mo.)